

Keeping Pershing's Army in Good Spirits

Henry P. Davison, Chairman of the Red Cross War Council, Explains the Way Our Soldiers Are Informed Truthfully of Home Conditions

If a cross section photograph could be taken to-day of the activities of the American Red Cross, both at home and abroad, the resultant picture would be a great comfort to every woman who has a husband or brother, father or son, enlisted in America's fighting forces. For it would show a scope of endeavor far greater than the original function of the Red Cross, which was merely to care for the wounded. The wounded still get attention, all that the best doctors and nurses can give them; but that is only one phase of the work that the American Red Cross now symbolizes. The rest of the picture is new.

In this new picture, which has been enlarged to meet the demands of modern warfare, the flag of the American Red Cross flies over every camp and cantonment where American men are being trained for battle, symbolizing a protection to their morale as well as their creature comforts. It flies beside canteens and rest houses, hospitals and prison camps. And to each of these places it brings the assurance that the American people stand behind their fighting men. But that is not all.

The Red Cross Flag.

The same flag with the Stars and Stripes floating beside it waves over huge warehouses in France and Italy, visualizing the American spirit that filled those warehouses with food, clothing and medical supplies for the French and Italians. It flies over similar warehouses in the war torn countries of our smaller Allies. It hangs from the windows of the new little homes that are springing up in the reclaimed sections of France and Belgium.

"To understand the significance of this combination campaign which the American Red Cross is waging both at home and abroad," said Henry P. Davison, chairman of the American Red Cross War Council, in an interview with a representative of THE SUNDAY SUN, "one has merely to glance back at one of the earliest lessons learned by our Allies. The first year of the war taught them that it takes something more than guns and military training to make a good fighter. The 'something more' needed was morale, and morale disappeared when worry over home troubles appeared in the trenches.

Giving the News of Home.

"The American Red Cross representatives abroad provide homes for the homeless, food for the hungry, care and medicine for the sick, of France and Belgium. Coincident almost with the start of this work the morale of the French and Belgian armies improved, for good news reaches the men at the front almost as rapidly as the bad.

"With this first hand evidence before them of the value of keeping a soldier's mind free from the care and worry incident to bad news from home, both the Red Cross and the War Department of this country agreed that similar care should be taken of American soldiers, only they decided to start it earlier.

"As a result, in every training camp and cantonment in this country to-day as well as in the American camps abroad, the American Red Cross has established a bureau of camp service comprising an associate director, a director of hospital service and as many assistants as are necessary. These men are authorized to do everything possible for the comfort and welfare of the soldiers and to respond to all requests for that service that are approved by the commanding officers of the camp in which they are stationed.

An Example of the Work.

"It is the task of the camp director of home service when requested to do so to look after the men who are worrying over real or fancied troubles at home. Perhaps the best way to illustrate his work is to take a concrete case that occurred recently in one of the Southern camps.

"A young soldier had received word that his mother was critically ill. He worried for several days and was totally unfit for duty. Finally he came to the camp director of home service and told his story.

"The latter immediately wired the division director of the Red Cross department of civilian relief in New York, who promptly investigated the matter and wired back that the mother was out of danger and convalescing satisfactorily.



Henry P. Davison.

This message was at once communicated to the young soldier, ridding him of the grief and worry that had been eating into him for days.

"The director of hospital service is another man who looks after the comfort and welfare of the soldiers. He gives his entire time to visiting the regimental infirmaries and base hospitals with a view to rendering any assistance needed in the way of supplies to take care of an emergency. He is also instructed to render such comfort and assistance as he can to sick soldiers.

"He is in position to assist them in communicating with their families and in keeping their families advised in reference to their condition. In connection with this work the Red Cross has been authorized by the Secretary of War to erect convalescent houses at the base hospitals and also the general hospitals in all the large camps and naval stations.

"These convalescent houses, which are now being built, will have a large room and auditorium with a bright sun parlor at one end of the building and rooms for the accommodation of the relatives of any soldier who is critically ill if the relatives desire to stay near him.

"The work of the Red Cross in the hospitals at the camps and cantonments is altogether supplementary to that of the army, whose officers are in full charge and

command and who are responsible for the care and treatment of the sick.

"The task of keeping up the morale of both the soldiers and their relatives by providing a medium through which they can be assured of the comfort and welfare of each other does not stop with the work in the training camps either here or abroad. The long arm of the American Red Cross follows the soldiers right into the trenches—and beyond when it is necessary.

"Let us suppose, for instance, that an American soldier is reported missing after an engagement with the enemy. When his name appears in that saddest of all news bulletins that the War Department sends out representatives of the Red Cross set out at once to get definite information concerning his fate.

"Frequently those who are reported missing turn up in German prison camps. In these cases the Red Cross locates them either through the lists of prisoners' names sent by the German Government to the International Red Cross headquarters at Geneva or through the reports made by the help committees of the prisoners themselves, which are forwarded to American Red Cross headquarters at Berne. In either case the family of the missing one is notified at once, and the notification is always accompanied by a letter informing his folks that the Red

Cross has already begun to send food and clothing to him and that this service will be maintained as long as he remains a prisoner of war.

"Right here it may be stated for the benefit of those mothers and fathers and wives whose minds have been seared by the stories of German prison camps that the American Red Cross, profiting by the experience of the British, has taken every precaution to see that those American boys whom the fortunes of war deliver into the hands of the enemy are given every comfort that it is possible to provide.

Prisoners Cared For.

"From the headquarters at Berne two ten pound packages of food go each week to every American located in a German prison camp. These packages contain sufficient food to enable him to live without being dependent in any way upon the food supplied him by his captors.

"Moreover, every parcel is personally receipted for by the prisoner and the postcard receipt sent back to the Red Cross. Past experience has proved that 95 per cent. of these packages are receipted for and that the soldier actually receives the food and is not coerced into signing for it.

"While it is not a cheerful thing for a family to know that its soldier representative has been made a prisoner, every father and mother and wife in this country may rest assured that if their loved one meets with that misfortune the American Red Cross will do everything that is possible to aid and comfort him. For in addition to the food and clothing supplies that will be sent to him arrangements have been made by the Red Cross to send him soap, pipes, tobacco, sweets, combs, toothbrushes and every other thing that is essential to his normal needs.

Keeps Families Informed.

"In the case of those reported missing who do not materialize in prison camps the Red Cross has a more difficult duty. Its representatives interview every man who survived the engagement in which they took part, and from the evidence thus acquired are frequently able to let the family of the missing one know if he was killed. It is a tragic task to communicate such news to a family, but it is kinder to those who are left to know definitely that the missing one is dead than to be tortured by uncertainty and its accompanying horrors.

"In addition to the work which the American Red Cross is doing for the direct benefit of American soldiers and their families it is conducting campaigns abroad which, in the opinion of the allied military staffs, are of indirect but certain benefit to the people in all of the allied countries. For these campaigns, which cover every form of relief work in France, Belgium, Italy, Serbia and Rumania, are helping to shorten the war—and every day that can be cut from the fighters' calendar will save thousands of useful lives and millions of dollars to the nations engaged.

The Men "Over There" Know.

"There may be those who will wonder how the building of a new home for a French *repatrié* in the reclaimed portion of the invaded district of France is going to help to shorten the war. There may be those who will question the military importance of caring for a Belgian orphan or of finding work and homes for the 600,000 Italian refugees who fled before Von Maekensen's troops.

"What have these things to do with either winning or shortening the war?

"It isn't easy to read the answer across 3,000 miles of ocean. But those who are 'over there' know. They know that the flag of the American Red Cross has become more than a symbol of humanitarianism to our allies. It stands before them to-day as the symbol of America and all her ideals and power. And behind it they see an army of 100,000,000 people who have already built a bridge across the Atlantic to bring aid and comfort to them and who stand ready to give the last drop of their blood to the cause which they have joined.

"This is the message which the American Red Cross has carried to Europe and which it will continue to deliver there so long as there are hungry Allies to be fed, homeless ones to be housed and broken spirits to be mended."

The Story of a Man Who Came Back

"LIEUT.-COL. ENGLAND relinquishes his commission, the King having no further use for his services," was the curt announcement that appeared in the London *Gazette* of December 11, 1914.

No greater disgrace than that involved in such an announcement can befall a soldier in war time. At this point in the Austrian or the German army the disgraced officer would have a revolver thrust into his hand and would be conducted to some secluded spot, there to shoot himself.

In England they have a more vindictive method. The London *Gazette*, the daily official list that circulates in every division, brigade, battalion and company of the British army and is printed in all the leading newspapers, may be read by the whole world. The disgrace is public property.

But, fortunately, the scandal is short lived. The story of Col. England passed rapidly into the limbo of the forgotten.

Nearly four years elapsed. Then, early in January of the present year, the London *Gazette* printed the announcement that "Edward Parker England has been reinstated to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Royal Artillery."

The restoration to honor was publicly announced on the very day that Col. England was discharged from the army a disabled private. His reinstatement, in the cold phraseology of the *Gazette*, was in

"consequence of his devotion to duty and gallantry in the field while in the ranks of the Devonshire Regiment."

The story that was crowded into those four years has only been equalled on one previous occasion in the records of the British army. Edward England came of a fighting stock. Three of his brothers were soldiers, and all three laid down their lives for their country. The only authentic record of the affair is given by a surviving brother, who is the rector of the church in a small village in Sussex.

During the retreat from Mons, when Col. England was in command of a munition column, a staff officer galloped up with the information that the column was in danger of being surrounded. Col. England's chief thought was for the safety of his men and it was with this object in view that he ordered certain portions of the transport to be abandoned. In the confusion more was cast astray than he knew of and, though the column won through, retribution was demanded when the loss was counted.

Physically for the time being Col. England was a broken man, and for weeks he was in hospital, but as soon as he was fit he joined the Army Service Corps as an ordinary private, giving his age as 40, although he was then over 50. Transferred to the South African Horse, he fought in Africa and later went to France with the Devons. Here he took part in many fights, bearing himself like the brave man the King has now declared him to be,